



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

1717 W. Jefferson - P.O. Box 6123 - Phoenix, AZ 85005

Janet Napolitano
Governor

David A. Berns
Director

January 30, 2005

TO: Chairman, Obstetrics Department
Chairman, Pediatric Department
Chairman, Neonatology Department

RE: Statewide Initiative to Identify Substance-Exposed Newborns

There is growing concern for the care and safety of substance-exposed newborns in Arizona and nationwide. The care and safety of this vulnerable population has a profound effect on the medical community and the child welfare system.

Under the direction of Governor Janet Napolitano, Arizona physicians with expertise in prenatal substance abuse, Child Protective Services (CPS), Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), Indian Health Services (IHS), and hospital social services have come together to develop a consistent approach to identifying substance-exposed newborns.

Based on extensive medical literature review, review of other state guidelines, and input from Arizona hospital newborn programs, this committee drafted *Guidelines for Identifying Substance-Exposed Newborns*.

As a health care provider, you have an important role in identifying substance-exposed newborns. These *Guidelines* have been developed to assist health care professionals:

- To improve your ability to effectively identify substance-exposed newborns;
- To standardize guidelines for maternal and neonatal screening in Arizona; and
- To improve the health and well-being for women and their at-risk newborns.

These *Guidelines* support the state law requirement that a health care professional, **who reasonably believes that a newborn infant may be affected by the presence of alcohol or a drug, to immediately report this information**, or cause a report to be made, to Child Protective Services. For reporting purposes, "newborn infant" means a newborn infant who is under thirty days of age (A.R.S. § 13-3620).

These *Guidelines* have been reviewed and commented upon by the following organizations: American Academy of Pediatrics-Arizona Chapter (AzAAP), Arizona Medical Association (ArMA) – Maternal Child Health Committee, Arizona Perinatal Trust, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists – Arizona Chapter.

Including these *Guidelines* in your policies and procedures for nursing staff, social services, and medical staff will provide a consistent approach and avoid potential bias in the identification of these newborns.

The attached documents will be maintained and updated on the Arizona Department of Health Services web site: www.azdhs.gov.

Any questions related to these *Guidelines* may be directed to Susan M. Stephens-Groff, MD, Medical Director, Comprehensive Medical & Dental Program, via email address: susanstephens@azdes.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Linda Johnson", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Linda Johnson, MSW, LCSW
Manager, Policy and Program Development
Arizona Department of Economic Security - Division of Children, Youth, and Families
Substance-Exposed Newborns Committee Chair

Enclosure